



# A FRAMEWORK FOR PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

December 2014





# Foreword

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When we founded the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation in 1999, we decided to focus on efforts to improve education and children's health in Central Texas, where we live. Today, our reach is both broader and more specific. We still focus on childhood education and health, but we work almost exclusively in urban environments. We're also global, with offices in Austin, New Delhi, and Cape Town.

India was the first place we began working outside the US. We opened our India office in 2006, when the country was undergoing massive change. Families were moving to cities by the hundreds of thousands. New businesses and business sectors were beginning to flourish. For an impact-oriented philanthropy, the opportunity to drive measurable progress for millions of children and families – to help change their lives in positive ways – was both irresistible and daunting.

We know this goal is too big for us to accomplish alone. It's bigger than any single organization – educational, governmental, or other – can achieve. But we believe that many players, working in parallel, can and will meet that goal. We also believe that the biggest journeys begin with small, measured steps. That's why we committed ourselves from the start to assessing each of our investments in India with an eye on understanding, clearly and in detail, what worked and what didn't to improve children's learning. This approach enables the sort of data-driven decision making that is at the heart of our approach to philanthropy.

In our India education portfolio, this has meant figuring out how to assess the impact of each program, to look closely at results, and to adjust course based on what we learn. It has meant measuring and quantifying program outcomes in very specific ways. And it has meant actively managing programs toward even better outcomes. Did a given after-school intervention help students measurably improve their reading fluency? Can we dive into the data to understand which interventions have an impact, and which are expendable? Does it show that programs provide better support to teachers trying to manage classrooms overcrowded with students at highly variable skill levels? Can the data be used to redesign a program so that it reaches

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more kids at the same cost and with the same high-quality impact? These are among the questions that the right data helps us address.

We've learned again and again and in all the fields we've worked in that you can't manage (much less improve upon) what you can't accurately measure. No one can. So, for the last seven years, our India team has worked to devise a reliable measurement system that helps us better manage our work. This paper provides anyone interested or invested in the Indian education field with an overview of that effort. It clearly explains how we've gone about the work, and the care we've taken to create a framework that provides high-quality actionable insights. We hope it also explains both why such a framework matters and how it can enable transformation within the classroom, throughout schools, and across cities and even states. We invite you to read the paper, explore its insights, and join us in the effort to ensure that all schools in India can put data to work to ensure higher quality learning for every student in every classroom.

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# INTRODUCTION

# Introduction

In India, the foundation's investments span several areas of practice, including education. We strive to always articulate a specific measure of success. It must be tangible and measurable, and we must copiously invest in measurement and assessment. We can then be assured that our collective resources intended to better education are focused on the most critical activities.

There currently are a multitude of surveys on learning outcomes in general. However, several of the assessments don't apply rigorous standards, while others don't use a replicable set of tools. Further, the data collected in these studies and resulting analyses are often not comprehensive or actionable. Some of the results lack objective maps of subject competencies among children; others lack insights to help teachers improve classroom practices.

The challenges of the pre-existing evaluation practices in India's schools, coupled with the foundation's commitment to clearly articulating and remaining focused on defined goals, prompted us to make measurement and evaluation integral elements of our

education portfolio.

We partnered with assessment experts who assumed responsibility for test design, data collection, test administration and analysis. Over the years, our collaboration with these vendors has evolved in nature and scope. Initially, we began incorporating an assessment component within each intervention we funded. Then, after achieving our initial objective of collecting data to measure grant outcomes, we established new goals: to refine our understanding of what constitutes 'good' data and how it can be best applied to deliver relevant, actionable results.

By 2010, we adopted a more streamlined approach wherein all philanthropic grants or investments were evaluated using a common assessment framework irrespective of the nature of the intervention. However, there was no established national standard to which we could refer. Therefore, our framework provided a much needed geographic and program-agnostic comparability and scalability, yet it was still limited in its ability to help us set aspirational learning outcome goals.

For the past two years, we've been collaborating with our assessment partners to establish a benchmark against which the performance of any student, school or region can be mapped. The scale leverages a nationwide, representative sample of learning competencies prevalent across different school systems. And yet our

commitment to evolving and implementing rigorous learning assessment frameworks has never been an end in itself: our primary goal is to use the data and insights to improve learning outcomes.

Our work in education assessments—and the beneficial work being done by others in the field—will be most useful if communicated to the broader education community in India. Our assessment partners have prepared reports and conducted workshops to share their findings and explain how our investees can best bring about change in the classroom to enhance academic outcomes.



The first chapter of this paper, The Common Assessments Framework, traces the framework's evolution; provides evidence of its distinction as a high-quality assessment; and describes the assessment, including technical details of tests such as their design and administration. The second chapter, Towards a Common Scale of Learning, examines the genesis of the benchmarking study, then describes it and outlines its broad objectives. The third chapter, Analysis and Action, takes a closer look at two parts of the assimilation and dissemination process once data pertaining to learning levels has been collected: 1) how it is received and managed; 2) how assessment vendors help program staff—both from the foundation and investee organisations—to understand

and interpret the evidence gathered by providing detailed reports and relevant recommendations. The final chapter, Case Studies, takes a look at three well-known education non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and describes how each has used the practice of assessment to refine, improve and systematise learning improvements, thus resulting in great progress in children's learning levels.

Our foundation's hope is that this paper provides anyone interested in the Indian education field with an overview of our work in evolving and applying a robust, assessment framework to children's learning and that it can be a tool for those interested in replicating our approach.



# THE COMMON ASSESSMENTS FRAMEWORK



# The Common Assessments Framework

## How Did It Evolve

Since its inception, the foundation has believed that scalable, measurable outcomes bring about systemic change. At the outset of each investment, we're clear about the need to assess and quantify our program progress and outcomes. To do this well and without bias, we rely on third-party vendors to complete rigorous assessments.

In 2006, when we started our education interventions in India, we required each of our investees to partner with independent, third-party assessment experts in order to accomplish the following:

1. Provide absolute levels of age and grade-appropriate competencies and relative improvements in student learning levels, as compared to the National Curriculum Framework
2. Provide actionable feedback to improve the impact of programs
3. Make such assessments attractive and affordable for partner organizations

Our team understood that there wasn't an easy, standardised way for our education programs to measure their effectiveness at the time. The measurement tools that did exist—studies or surveys in the public domain—primarily offered broad generalizations about the state of pedagogical outcomes in government schools versus private elite schools or proficiency in basic literacy and numeracy.

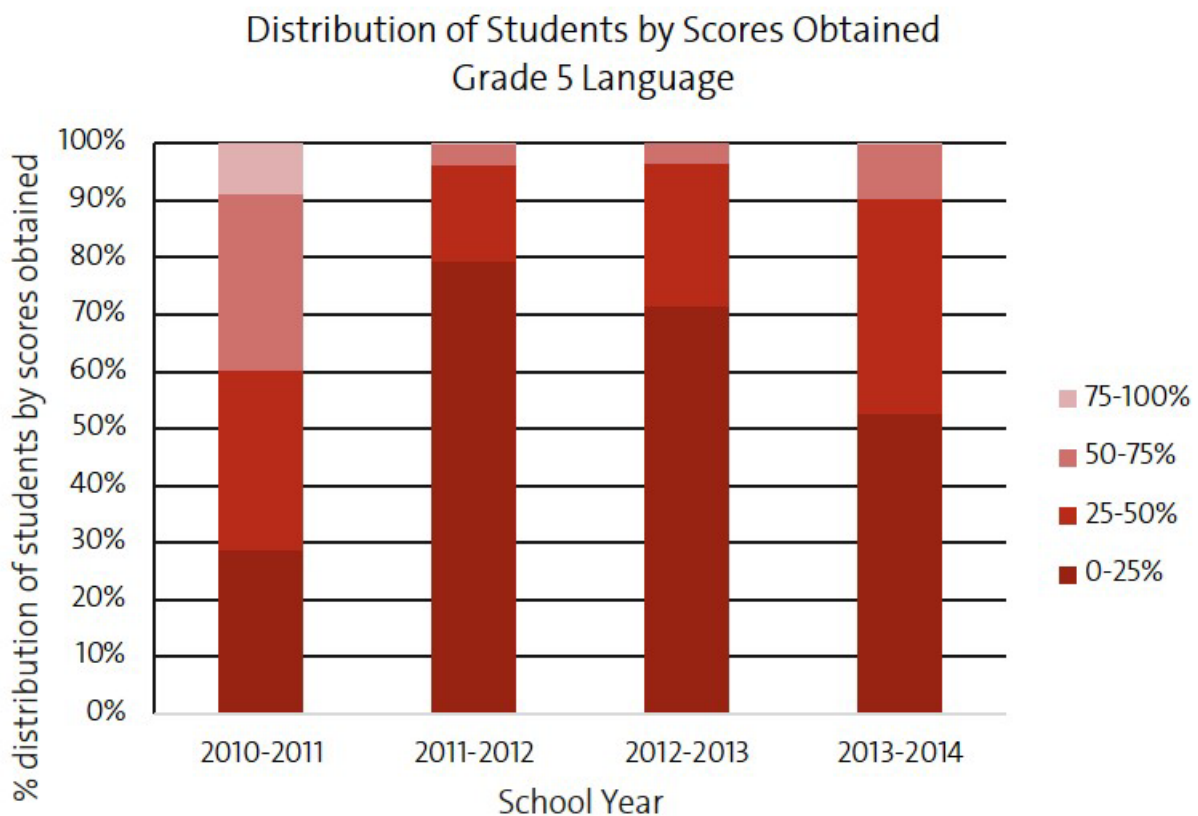
We knew that unless assessments provided specific data and analysis divided by subject competencies, teachers could not establish learning achievement goals for students or bring about meaningful change in classrooms.

There are education organizations that are not accustomed to measuring their interventions or outcomes in a rigorous way. Even when reliable data is made available, the lack of infrastructure or capacity in terms of understanding makes it challenging to fully understand the results and is a barrier to positive progress.

## In Action Example

Figure -1 below demonstrates that summary statistics can drive powerful change in a very short time. This 2010 example shows an after-school coaching program that was targeted for the bottom quartile of the class. However, data showed that the class composition at the start of the year was heavily skewed towards high performing students. In a targeted program this was a big operational issue. Simple operational measures like diagnostic tests at the beginning of the year have helped them improve their student selection over the years.

FIGURE-1





## What Defines and Distinguishes High-Quality Assessments?

High quality education assessments are distinguished by their ability to navigate their way across a series of thematic, academic and psychometric challenges.

**RELEVANCE:** The ability to ascertain whether the data or analysis is considered important by experts in the area

**ADEQUACY OF QUESTIONS:** The availability of an adequate mix of questions to cover the material and proficiencies being measured

**INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS:** The availability of methods that ensure scores are interpreted in a fashion that can deliver accurate measurement of ability

**VALIDITY ACROSS LANGUAGES:** The use of terms and words used in tests that can be impartially and equally translated across languages to ensure no group(s) is at an advantage over one or more other groups

Vendors address the above challenges, which all relate to the validity of a test, by:

1. Testing what is *in the curriculum* so no child is ever tested on material that she or he has not been taught/been expected to have been taught
2. Applying a mechanism of multiple reviews and approvals by experts to ensure every question adequately spans the proficiency it is testing
3. Pre-testing the assessment tool with a sample of schools and speaking to students to observe their responses to questions

4. Consulting language experts and implementing a review process for written tests to ensure words and terms used are impartially and equally translated across languages

In addition to validity, what distinguishes high quality assessments is their reliability, or their ability to provide consistent results, sometimes called *repeatability of reading*. This simply means that if a student were to take the same test after a few weeks, she or he would receive the same or a similar score.

## What Does The Common Assessments Framework Consist Of?

Our initiation into assessments cycles consisted of individual partnerships between the organisations we supported and third party assessment vendors. However, by 2010, with our education portfolio growing in size and complexity, the foundation decided to standardise its measurement practices and transition to a common assessment framework. This guaranteed that all of the foundation's investees applied common practices and tests, using a shared assessment approach.

As a result, any assessment vendor involved in measurement programs being supported by the foundation now adheres to the following parameters:

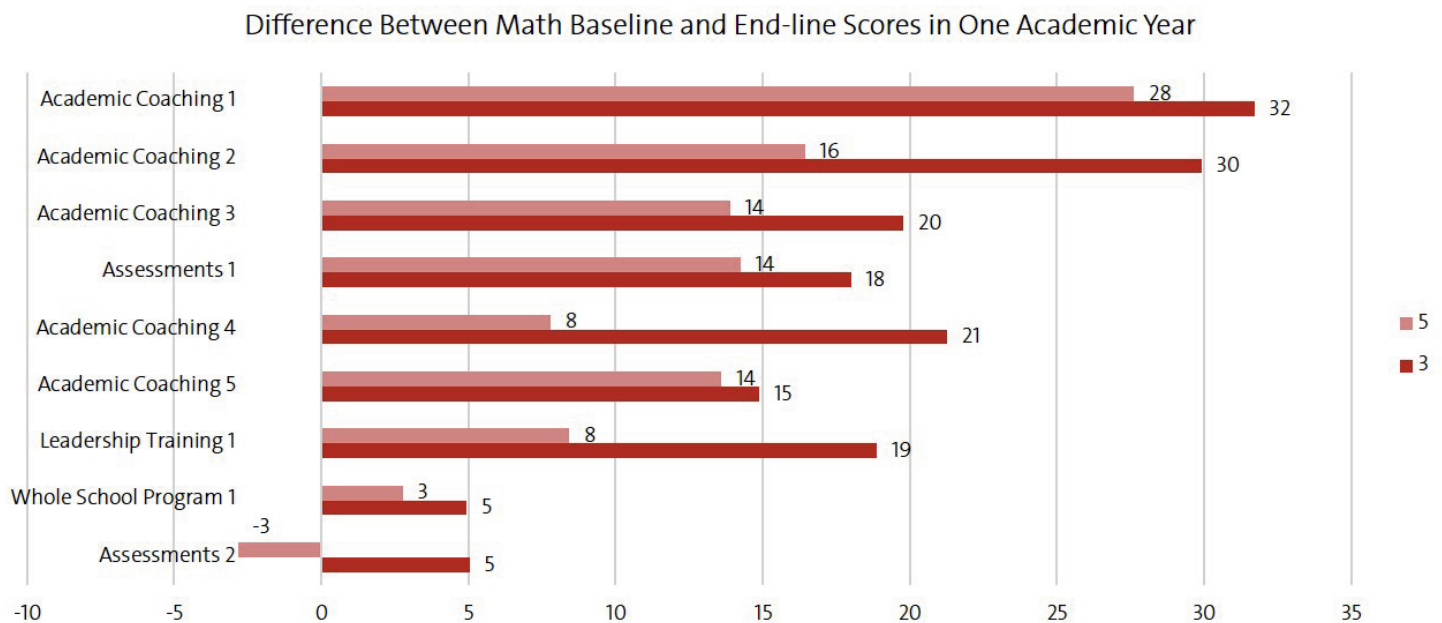
1. Design common test papers for grades 3, 5, 7 and 9, given that these are the major inflection points
2. Divide test paper composition as follows:
  - 80% aligned to the National Curriculum Framework (NCF – 2005)
  - 20% aligned to the state education board standards
3. Conduct synchronized baseline and end-line testing across all partners
4. Conduct tests for the intervention group, as well as a selected, comparable, control group
5. Conduct two rounds of assessments in an academic year to enable measurement of learning improvements that take place over the span of an academic year
  - Baseline completed at the beginning of an academic year
  - End-line completed at the end of an academic year

For the first time, this common methodology enabled us to view results in a standardized fashion, irrespective of the nature and geographical location of their intervention. It also helped us understand absolute and relative gains in achieving student learning levels now that all of the interventions could be plotted on one grid and be compared consistently over time and across a spectrum of interventions. With this data, we could also look at results in the context of the environment, teachers and students and see what was needed on the ground to help put realistic improvements in place.

## In Action Example

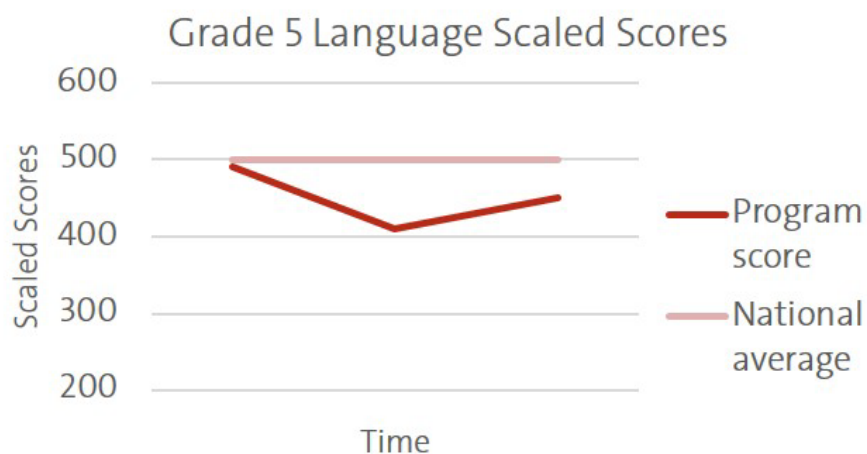
A big takeaway for us has been how after-school academic coaching can give large boosts when compared to larger whole school interventions. In Figure-2, four out the top five performers in our portfolio are academic programs.

FIGURE-2



Another area where we have been able to make fair and informed decisions has been observing our programs across years. In Figure-3 below, the three year performance of a program shows that it is consistently within one standard deviation of the national average, and therefore, a one year dip in results is not concerning.

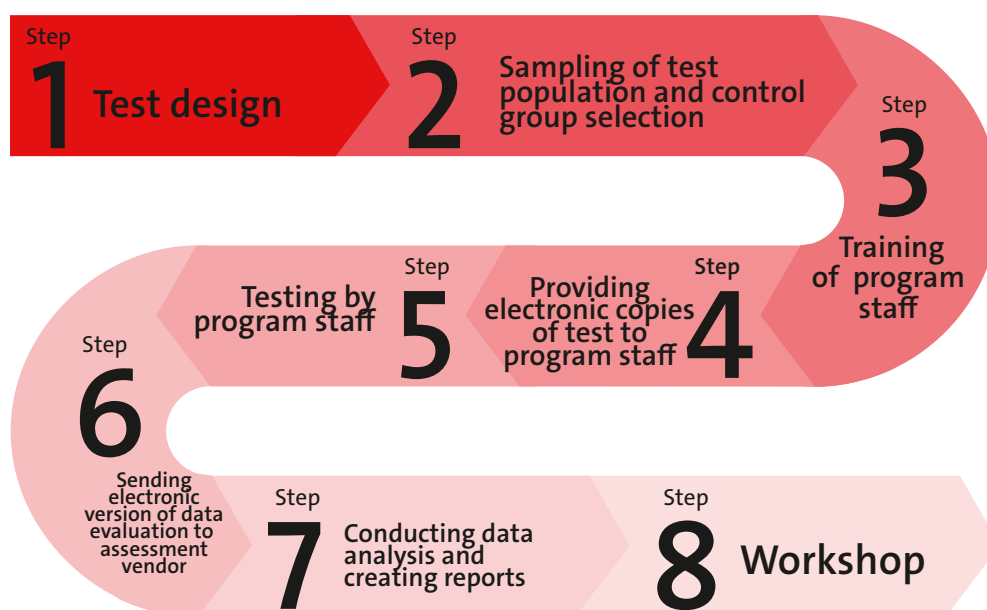
FIGURE-3



A common framework also gave us considerable economies of scale, as we used the same measurement tools across all our interventions. Applying the common assessment framework for each investee entailed the following elements:

- The assessment vendor develops test paper questions and provides electronic copies of the same to program staff in the organisation
- The [vendor completes sampling](#) of the target population to be tested
- An appropriate control group is specified by the assessment vendor
- The [vendor provides training in conducting tests](#) to program staff through master trainer workshops
- The program staff completes the tests in the standardized manner, as specified by the vendor
- Upon completion of the assessment, the vendor analyses the data and program staff are provided soft copies of student performance data in a [pre-agreed upon format](#)

When broken down, the testing process can be seen to consist of the following steps:



# TOWARDS A COMMON SCALE OF LEARNING



# Towards A Common Scale Of Learning

## The Evolution of the Benchmarking Study

The common assessment framework gave us a tool with which to measure all of our program outcomes—both on their own progress and in comparison to each other. However, we found that, in the absence of a national standard of learning, we were unable to set 'aspirational goals' or determine grade-appropriate learning benchmarks for children.

In order to fill this gap, the foundation commissioned a study to assess approximately 75,000 children from three school systems, located in six states, in two subjects – Mathematics and Language.

The study's three main objectives were to:

1. Achieve a quantitative understanding of learning levels of children from grade 3 to 7 in India's various school systems catering to a variety of socio-economic, language and geographic variables
2. Analyse and synthesise collected data to establish grade-appropriate performance benchmarks and set targets for learning-level improvements among children served by the foundation's partners
3. Provide data access to those engaged in the education field and interested in the improvement of academic outcomes through data-based assessments

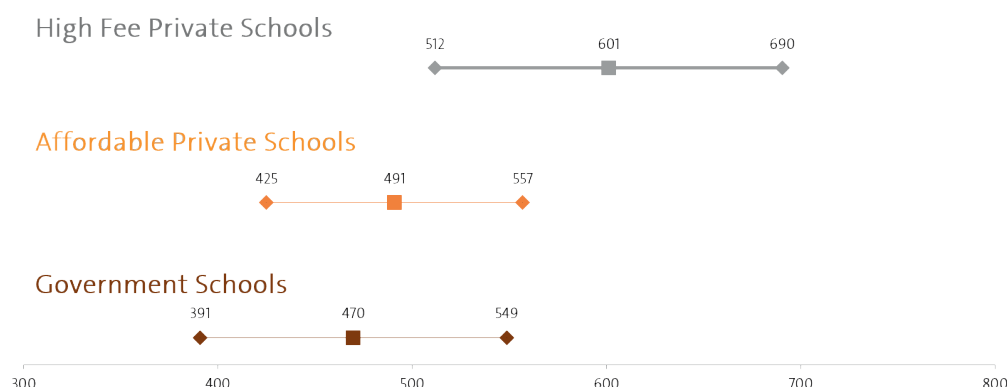
Our study was the first of its kind conducted with the intent of providing a comprehensive view of children's grade-specific, learning proficiencies across a wide variety of school systems. It helped fill gaps in overviews of the Indian education system by providing competency-wise breakdowns in learning proficiencies and provided a comprehensive overview of 'grade-level' student performance.

## In Action Example

Figure-4 below shows the scaled scores of one grade subject combination across three different school types..

FIGURE-4

### Grade 5 Math Scaled Scores



## Benchmarking Study: What Did It Consist Of?

Given the breadth and complexity of variables present in India's education sector, the study commissioned had to be comprehensive, objective and representative. To meet the benchmarking objectives noted above, the following requirements, along with others relating to the [design of test papers](#), were made necessary prerequisites of the assessments:

1. Administered to children studying in government schools, low-fee private schools and high-fee private schools with [sufficiently large sample sizes](#).
2. Administered to schools located across six Indian states representative of a range of student learning outcomes, from 'above national average' to 'below national average'.
3. Inclusive of substantially large numbers of questions for every class level to ensure inclusion of a vast array of competencies, as well as to facilitate comparison against future tests in which some of these could be embedded.
4. Framed to cover adjacent class levels to understand the linear progression of growth across classes.
5. Administered in only two important subjects – Language and Maths – where learning improvements are crucial in elementary grades.
6. Administered in the form of end-line testing at the end of the school year, by which time there was assumed to be a better level of learning than at the start of a school year.
7. Active exploration of alternative measurement and analysis methodologies to help finalize the common scale and to measure and compare growth. \*\*

\*\* Note: This was to include the possible application of the advanced item response theory, which recognises and values the difficulty level of a question that has been answered rather than simply the correct response.

Among these requirements, special priority was placed on ensuring the tests would include a large set of questions covering **different competencies** in the two selected subjects. The hope was that we would obtain a more nuanced and detailed understanding of what and how much children were learning.

Additionally, the test questions were designed to enable high-level, subsequent analysis that could provide insights into the distribution of students in percentile bands, apart from performance in specific competencies, in different school categories. Displaying data on percentile bands (in addition to grade-level proficiencies) allowed us to reframe and shift a given program's direction as

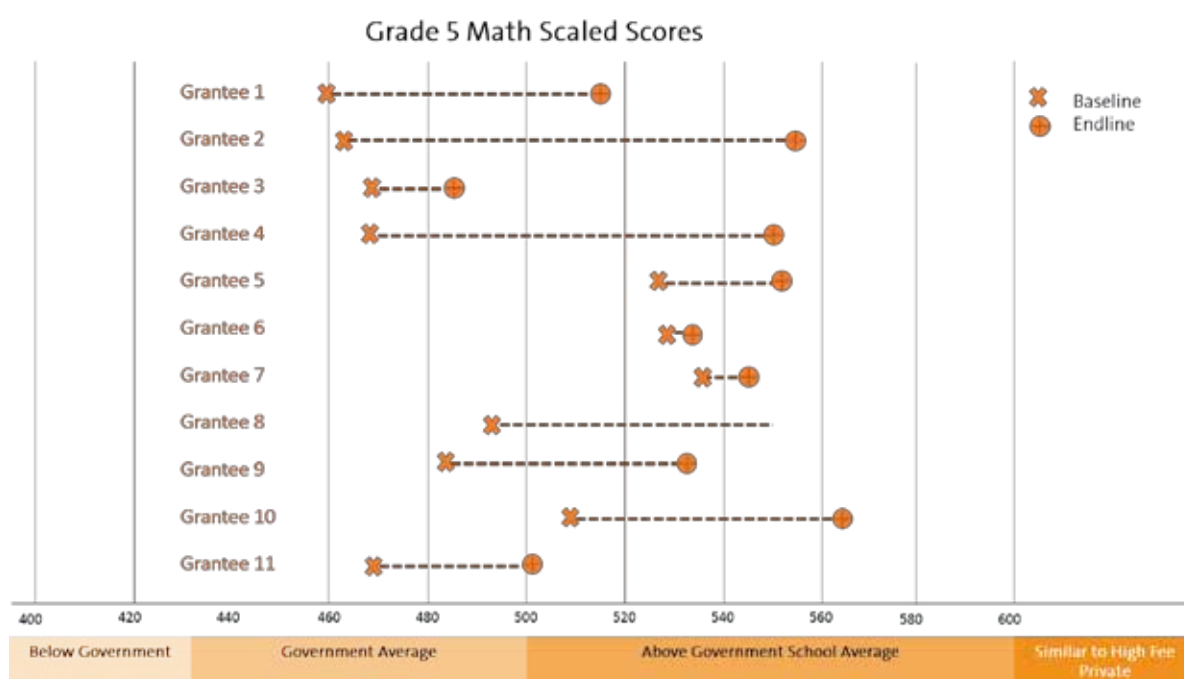
needed to accomplish our intended goal. For instance, an objective to achieve 60% marks in a certain subject for a specific grade level was replaced with a broader aim -- to see a grade as a whole, in one school system, moving 'up' to the percentile band placed statistically 'above' it.

At the foundation, the scale represents a completion of the assessments cycle that we initiated in India in 2006. Our interest in conducting assessments then, as it is now, has been to find the most effective way of enhancing children's learning by providing those whom we support with accurate, actionable measurement data and insights.

## In Action Example

Figure-5 below clearly puts each organization on the same scaled score and shows movement from baseline to end-line.

FIGURE-5



After more than a decade of experience, we are cognisant of the need to view assessments from end to end: from their conceptualisation and administration to their dissemination, analysis and application.



**\*\*Note:** This was to include the possible application of the advanced item response theory, which recognises and values the difficulty level of a question that has been answered rather than simply the correct response.

# ANALYSIS AND ACTION

# Analysis and Action

Underlying all of the foundation's assessment work across our range of educational interventions are two overarching objectives:

1. To work with our partners to ensure that programs are having an immediate and positive impact on children's learning levels
2. To ensure that any assessment tool is designed to provide pragmatic feedback to the program by identifying strong and weak areas

To examine the second objective in greater detail, it is critical to review the series of steps involved in applying the results of such an assessment to improve an intervention's outcome.

## Taking Stock of Assessment Results

There is no doubt that the founding principle of a high-quality assessment lies in its robust design and standardised administration. However, an equally crucial component that helps to distinguish it from less effective measurements is its systematic and pragmatic application.

As a result, one of the key responsibilities of an assessment vendor, is his or her work in training program staff to conduct the required tests according to exact specifications.

Assessment vendors conduct master trainer workshops for all program staff to equip them with the expertise in executing the tests in a prescribed fashion. Program teams are also assigned the responsibility of providing electronic copies of student performance data that the assessment vendor then analyses and turns into a report for both the foundation and the participating organisations.

## Analysing and Disseminating Results to Relevant Stakeholders

Once the results of an assessment are collated, the vendor disseminates the findings and its analysis to the two primary stakeholders involved: the relevant program staff and the foundation. The vendor submits [assessment reports](#) to the two groups, in two parts:

1. **A section for the senior managers of the program staff and the foundation that includes:**
  - A summary of the results
  - Absolute distribution of students by grade competency and advancement in learning levels across subjects, grades and schools
  - Common areas of skill strengths and weaknesses
  - Trend analysis and related statistical insights



## 2. A section for teachers and academic supervisors with:

- ♦ Question-specific analysis
- ♦ Common areas of skill strengths and weaknesses
- ♦ Specific recommendations for improvement of teaching and learning in the classroom

Immediately after submitting its detailed reports, vendors undertake two workshops. The first workshop is conducted for the foundation and the program staff and encompasses the overall scores and distributions of each of the programs, as well as provides advice on the areas that need to be quarantined for extra attention. On the basis of this workshop, the partner's program staff is faced with two decisions:

1. What is the forward looking strategy for the program in terms of the baseline?
2. What implications do the collective results have for the program relative to investing in specific types of interventions during the end-line?

During the second workshop, vendors instruct relevant program staff members about the methodology, purpose and implications of the assessment results. Utmost care is taken to ensure that the results of an assessment are communicated in a way that directly informs and influences the intervention strategy to plan for the future direction, execution and design of the program.

## Taking Action: Applying Results to Interventions

The results that assessment vendors submit towards the end of an assessment cycle include a detailed section on recommendations. These build on the trends the findings have revealed and propose concrete measures that teachers can undertake to bring about immediate and effective change in students' learning levels.

For instance, if it has been found that children studying Math in grade 3 have shown poor ability in key skills such as 'Application to Daily Life' or 'Problem Solving', then the recommendations

include introducing mental math exercises to increase the habit of using math in daily life. It can also include proposing the inclusion of a large number of practical exercises in the classroom to help students understand the function of measurement in ordinary life.

Likewise, recommendations regarding learning levels in Hindi for the same grade could include reading prose and poetry in class in order to improve reading ability; increased frequency of dictation to help improve spellings and introduction of circle time activities to improve children's ability to listen.

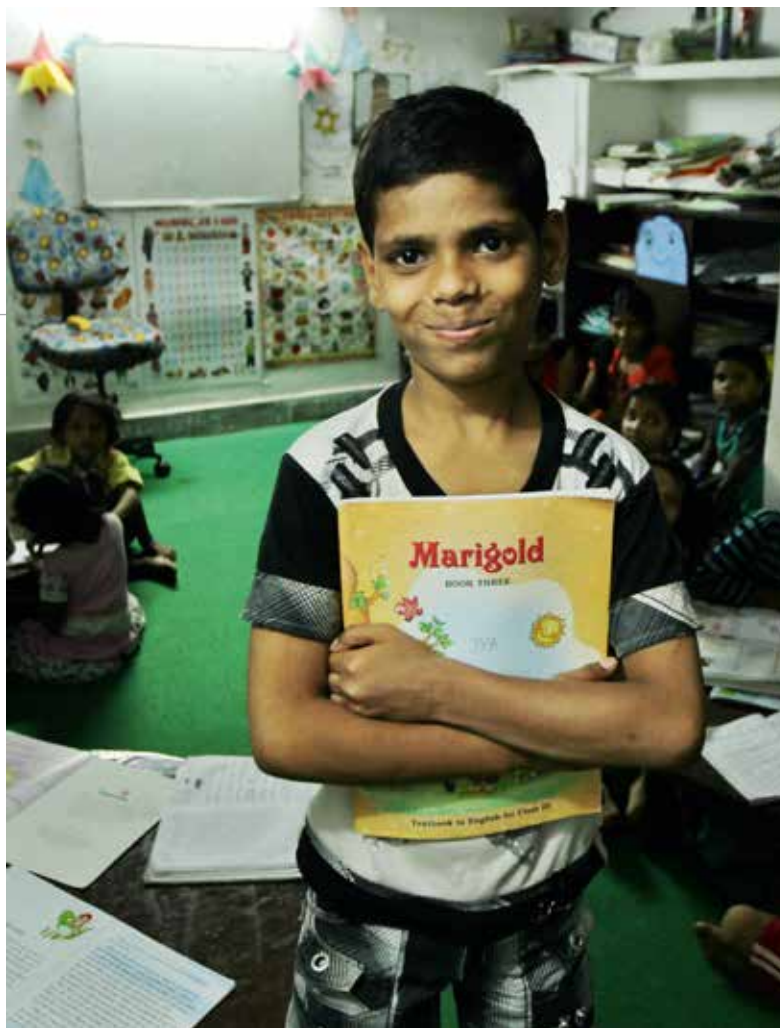


# CASE STUDIES

# Case Studies

Case studies best demonstrate how our assessment framework has already helped various education programs refine and optimise their pedagogical goals. We will take a look at how three different education organisations—with distinctly different objectives—have seen their outcomes improve due to the execution and application of assessment results.

The organisations are [Kaivalya Education Foundation \(KEF\)](#), [Naandi Foundation](#) and [Bodh Shiksha Samiti](#).



## KEF

Kaivalya Education Foundation launched its headmaster leadership development program in 2010 with an aim to radically improve children's learning proficiencies by enabling and empowering its school leaders.

However, after three years, the organization found the program was not having any impact on student levels. The program had been administering student assessments since the inception of the program. To determine what could be improved, the organisation analysed the 2013 common assessment baseline results of 150 government primary schools it was working with as part of a one-year old program in Surat, Gujarat. It also studied the trends in the results from its three-year old program in Jhunjunu, Rajasthan.

KEF analysed the assessment data by breaking it down into grade-specific competencies. For instance, learning proficiencies of children in grade 3 for Language and Math demonstrated that while the performance on higher order skills (such as 'problem solving' in Math and 'comprehension beyond stated facts' in Language) was low as per expectations, the scores on even the most primary skills in each subject was only approaching 50%. As a result, KEF concluded that:

- The order of skills was there to see and act upon – children were performing below desired levels on the basic skills for which mastery was required to be able to progress to other more complex skills.
- This helped the organisation see why children were not able to keep pace with what was being taught in class, as teachers kept aiming to cover the prescribed syllabus in full without knowing the children were still struggling to gain mastery of the first few steps of grade-appropriate proficiencies.
- As a result, the basic skills that actually needed focused intervention were clearly identified.
- The focus of the organization shifted from just empowering headmasters, to empowering headmasters with data and strategies to improve children's learning levels.

The team accomplished this on the ground by implementing several strategies:

- Conducting in-house assessments of grade 3 Math and Language in all schools other than those previously assessed by the vendor, Educational Initiatives, to provide every headmaster with data to use.
- Providing assessment results to the headmasters to help them accept and then take responsibility for the changes necessary.
- Designating a six-week period as the focus period for learning level improvement to drive attention to student learning.
- Changing the focus of workshops from being reflective and thematic to more proactive and interactive to improve learning levels.
- Demonstrating the importance of regular and rigorous assessment and designing tools, including activity banks, to help headmasters record skill based inputs.

The actions taken above led to improved results during end-line testing. The improvement in learning levels relative to the control group jumped 17 percentage points in Language and 27 percentage points in Math in the academic year 2013-14. As a result, KEF has since then made regular and continuous assessments an integral component of its school leadership programs. Its theory of change that had begun with a primary focus of empowering headmasters transitioned to making improvements in student learning levels through empowered school leaders.

## Naandi

As part of its organisational focus on child education, Naandi operates an education intervention program, Ensuring Children Learn (ECL), which provides after-school remedial education to children attending government schools in Hyderabad.

An ongoing partnership between the foundation and Naandi aims to impact learning outcomes of 7,000 children in 150 schools of Hyderabad with a target of scoring marks that are 40% higher than that of the control group, 30% higher than marks scored at baseline, and with a minimum of 60% absolute marks in the end-line test.

Naandi initiated an evaluation of children's learning levels nearly as soon as it introduced its program and has

witnessed the completion of the 11th phase of assessments in 2013-14. The assessments, which have always been carried out by independent third party vendors, have shown time and again that children attending Naandi's program score significantly higher in Mathematics and Language (Telugu & Urdu) compared to other children in similar schools.

For instance, results for control group schools in Math (in Urdu medium) in grade 3 showed an average score of 39.8%

as compared to 70.4% scored by children receiving Naandi's remedial program in government schools in the end-line 2013 assessment cycle. At many levels, Naandi's success in running its remedial education program is illustrative of an intervention that has *improved because it is being measured*. Regular and continuous assessments have resulted in the following improvements.

- Naandi understood where children were when they entered a new state, district or school program. This helped relevant teams plan and pitch their teaching and learning materials, as well as classroom management in specific ways.
- The student performance strengths and weaknesses of children at each grade level became evident, helping teams adapt their pedagogical materials and teacher training programs.
- On many occasions, Naandi found a correlation between a group of children's weaknesses in a key competency and the teachers' level of comprehension in the same. For example, if children showed weaknesses in understanding fractions and decimals, their teachers demonstrated the same. This helped Naandi plan more efficient teacher training sessions on these competencies at their fortnightly training sessions and its inclusion in teacher guidelines and manuals.
- Regular assessments also helped Naandi understand and plan the number of sessions a child needed in order to learn a competency or concept. As a result, the number of worksheets for the child and the number of lesson plans for the teacher were designed and decided according to the findings of the assessments.

At another level, the regular supply of rigorous data from continuous assessments also became useful to spur greater efficiencies internally by tying the performance of Naandi's team to the performance of the children with whom they were working. This helped increase a sense of ownership and responsibility in the team, which improved commitment to the program's core objective: enhancing children's grade-appropriate learning proficiencies.



# Bodh

Bodh has been working in Rajasthan for more than 20 years to help improve the teaching and learning processes in government schools.

Bodh had used assessments from day one of their program, and it had made a significant difference. In 2010, the Government of Rajasthan invited Bodh to be the technical partner for a pilot project to change the assessment system of the state. Bodh agreed but advocated for the inclusion of pedagogic and curricular reforms as main components of the project, saying that solely making changes in the way children are assessed would not be enough to improve learning outcomes. The state agreed. It undertook an integrated adoption of the National Curriculum Framework-2005, textbooks from the NCERT, Bodh's suggested pedagogy, and Bodh's Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation(CCE) program for testing in 60 mainstream schools in Alwar and Jaipur.

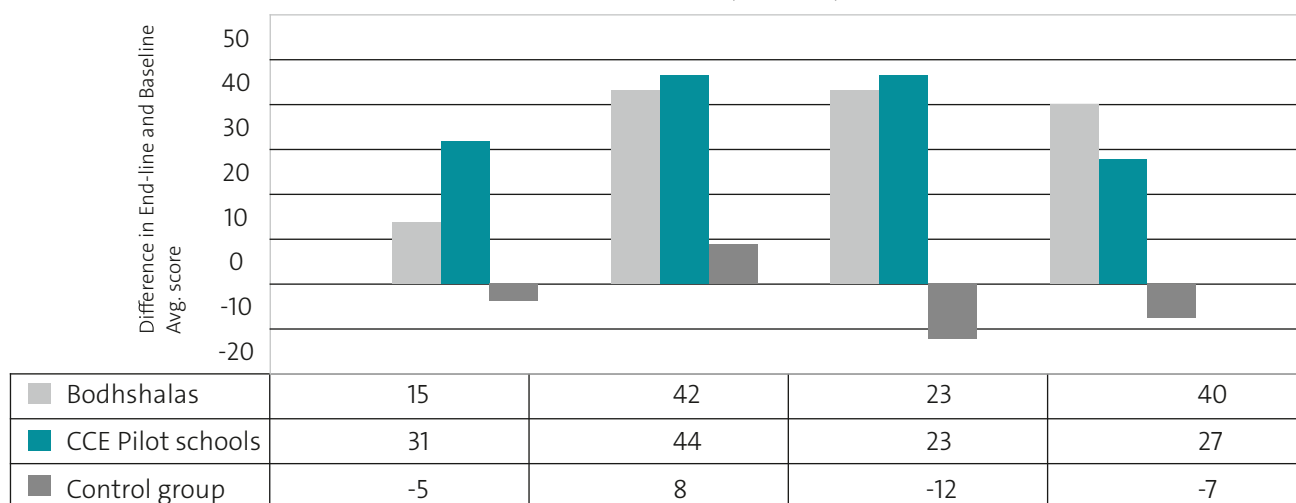
Bodh provided the following support:

1. All content development of assessment formats, teacher training manuals and source books
2. Annual six-day teacher training, as well as monthly enrichment workshops in subjects
3. One Bodh resource person per school for daily mentoring and advising

The program delivered strong impact. The chart below shows the 2010-11 impact data (difference in end-line and baseline scores in Math and Language in grades 3 and 5) of Bodhshalas and CCE pilot schools (government schools) in comparison to the control group.



Difference in End-line and Baseline Average Scores  
(2010-11)



In 2011-12, the end-line results again showed strong performance with high learning levels at or above the score of 60 in Bodhshalas, and 50 or above in pilot schools.

After witnessing the success of the pilot, the state decided to scale the program to the entire state in 2012 using its own resources. Bodh trained a team of 100 government-selected trainers who further trained teachers of about 3000 schools (covering all the districts of Rajasthan).







## About the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation

Inspired by their passion for children and by a shared desire to improve the lives of children living in urban poverty, Michael and Susan Dell established their US-based foundation in 1999.

The central mission of the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation is transforming the lives of children living in urban poverty through better education, health and family economic stability. In 2006, the foundation opened a satellite office in India. The scale of need among India's children, coupled with the country's unique combination of economic and urban growth, made it a natural hub for furthering the foundation's mission.

As of 2014, the Dell family foundation had committed more than INR 745 million crores (\$130 million USD) toward the effort to drive measurable social progress for India's children.

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